

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY LONDON

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FOLLOWING REPEAT JIDDA 4823 ACTION STATE INFO LONDON (3903)
SANA 2475 JUNE 28.

QUOTES E C R E T JIDDA 4823

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, SA, YE, YS
SUBJECT: WHAT NEXT FROM THE YEMENS? SOME POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
FOR USG

REF: (A) JIDDA 4704 (B) JIDDA 4770

1. SUMMARY: INDICATIONS OF GROWING SAG CONCERN AND POSSIBLE
ACTIONS BECAUSE OF DEVELOPMENTS IN PDRY MAY POSE DIFFICULT
POLICY QUESTIONS FOR USG. END SUMMARY.

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2. WE SENSE INCREASING CONCERN AND TENSION WITHIN SAG BE-
CAUSE OF RECENT EVENTS IN NORTH AND SOUTH YEMEN. THE SAUDIS
OBVIOUSLY FEEL THAT THE ASSASSINATION OF GHASHMI AND THE
EXECUTION OF RUBAI ALI ARE A PART OF AN
OVERALL SOVIET-INSPIRED PLAN ULTIMATELY DIRECTED AT THEM.
THEY SEEM CONVENCED THAT ANOTHER SHOE WILL DROP AND MAY WELL

BE MAKING PLANS TO HEAD OFF THE NEXT STEP OR COUNTER IT WITH SPEED AND FORCE.

HERE ARE SOME OF THE INDICATORS:

(1) A CONTINUING FULL STATUS ALERT OF ALL ARMED FORCES HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO INSTRUCTORS IN THE VARIOUS SERVICE SCHOOLS AS WELL AS KEEPING PILOTS ON FLIGHT LINE ALERT;

(2) ACTIVITIES OF PRINCE TURKI AL FAISAL. HE IS CONTINUEING TO EMERGE AS A KEY PERSON IN SAG WITH RESPONSIBILITIES AXCEEDING HIS DUTIES AS CHEIF OF GENERAL INTELLIGENCE DIRECTORATE. HE WAS THE KING'S SPOKESMAN TO AMBASSADORS AND INTELLIGENCE CHEIFS ON 25 JUNE (REFTEL A), HAWEVER, FONMIN SAUD WAS OUT OF THE COUNTRY AT THE TIME WITH CROWN PRINCE FAHD. IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER HE VISITED THE FOLLOWING CAPITOLS:

CAIRO, DAMASCUS, AMMAN. HE IS CURRENTLY IN BAGHDAD AND EXPECTED TO GO TO KHARTOUM TOMMORROW. HE SPOKE TO US AS KING'S REPRESENTATIVE AND UNDOUBTEDLY IS PLAYING SAME ROLE IN HIS TRAVELS.

INTELLIGENCE REPORTS LEAD US TO BELEIVE THAT HE IS SOUNDING OUT SENTIMENT AND POSSIBLY SOLICITING SUPPORT FOR EFFORT TO COUNTER ANY PDRY INITIATIVES. HE MAY ALSO BE ASSESSING WHAT SUPPORT MAY BE PRESENT FOR INITIATIVES AGAINST PDRY BEFORE NEXTSHOE DROPS. PARTICULARLY SIGNIFI-
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CANT IS VISIT TO BAGHDAD AS IRAQI ABSTENTION FROM ANY ARAB-DIRECTED ACTION AGAINST PDRY WOULD PROBABLY BE CRUCIAL.

(3) IN ADDITION, SAG HAS BEEN IN CLOSE COMMUNICATION WITH IRAN; AMBASSADOR TO IRAN WAS FIRST FOREIGN REPRESENTATIVE TO MEET WITH PRINCE TURKI ON 25 JUNE; ON 26 JUNE IRANIAN AMBASSADOR WAS CALLED TO RIYADH FOR MEETING WITH PRINCE SULTAN; WE THINK SAUDIS WOULD NOT CONSIDER ANY AGGRESSIVE ACTION AGIANST PDRY WITHOUT FULL BACKING OF IRANIANS.

3. ANY ACTION IN YEMENS, WHETHER PREDEPITATED BY PDRY OR OTHERWISE, WILL PROBABLY SPARK SUBSTANTIAL SAUDI PARTICIPATION EITHER OPENLY OR COVERTLY, WITH RESULTING QUESTIONS FOR USG SUCH AS:

(1) TO WHAT EXTENT WILL WE PERMIT FMS EQUIPMENT FURNISHED SAUDIS TO BE TRANSFERRED OR USED AGAINST PDRY;

(2) IN THE EVENT OF SAUDI MILITARY INVOLVEMENT, WHAT ROLE, IF ANY, CAN OR SHOULD BE PLAYED BY U.S. MILITARY ADVISORS AND U.S. CONTRACTORS WHO SUPPORT SAG

FORCES;

(3) SAUDIS HAVE ALREADY INDICATED (REFTELS) THAT
THEY EXPECT SOLID U.S. SUPPORT AND WILL UNDOUBTEDLY RE-
QUEST SAME FOR OVERT OR COVERT ACTIONS AGAINST YAR. CON-
SIDERING STRONG SOVIET PRESENCE IN PDRY, WE DOUBT SAUDIS
WOULD PARTICIPATE IN DIRECT ACTIVITIES AGAINST PDRY WITH-
OUT U.S. SUPPORT. WHAT ARE WE GOING TO TELL THEM?

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